

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

I. Long-standing North African ferment has increased in French Morocco in past fortnight; has almost completely died down in Tunisia.

A. French government made surprise concession gesture to Tunisian nationalists 31 July.

B. Premier Mendes-France proffered three-fold program in lightning trip to Tunis. Terms: internal autonomy for Tunisia; military and diplomatic union--revision of protectorate treaties; guarantee of French interests.

C. Formation new Tunisian cabinet delayed week by French refusal to agree its composition--10 Tunisians, 4 French. As finally approved, cabinet contains 4 prominent moderate Tunisian nationalists, 2 of whom will participate in negotiations with France.

D. However, French settlers continue strongly oppose "concessions."

II. Current situation in Morocco marked by upsurge violence.

A. "Month of vengeance," to commemorate French dethronement

Sultan last August, has already resulted in death toll of over 70 and 250 injured.

B. Riots concentrated three areas:

1. Fez--religious center.

2. Petitjean--industrial area, near US Air Force base,
Sidi Slimane.

3. Port Lyautey--site of US naval air base.

C. Potential danger peak during August:

1. Incidents and riots of past week attended religious holidays--on eve of which, last year, Sultan Ben Youssef was deposed. Disorders likely to continue until 20 August, calendar anniversary of dethronement.

D. Mendes-France stated in National Assembly (10 August) that main objective in Morocco for present is restore order, seek settlement with present Sultan.

1. This sharp contrast with Tunisian policy, which highlights

negotiations with nationalist leaders, grant of internal autonomy.

III. Short-term Prospects:

A. In absence more substantial French policy change, agitation and sporadic disorders likely to continue.

B. Formerly pro-French Moroccans will become increasingly disillusioned.

1. One group being increasingly alienated by French "do-nothing" policy, particularly in contrast Tunisia.

2. Second group, exemplified by Berber chieftain El Glaoui, equally disillusioned by French failure take stronger repressive stand.

3. Settlers, worried by possibility of French concessions, will increase pressure on Assembly.

IV. Long-term Problems:

A. French replacement of unacceptable Sultan (apparently not now envisioned by Mendes-France) would not necessarily ameliorate situation.

1. While it would be a prerequisite to further discussions with nationalists, would not be acceptable to settler groups.

a likely French proposal, would be incomplete solution.

1. It would always be object of increased nationalist

demands.

2. And always subject to French settler pressures.